


THE TROUBLES IN KANSAS, - history

AND OF

THE SENATE'S BILL FOR THE ADMISSION OF KANSAS AS A
STATE INTO THE UNION.

BY AN INDIANIAN.

WASHINGTON:
PRINTED AT THE UNION OFFICE.
1856.



A REVIEW

OF

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THE KANSAS QUESTION.

Four years ago there were two, and only two, great political parties in the country—the Democratic and Whig parties.

Outside of these there was an inconsiderable faction, sectional in its character, composed almost exclusively of northern men, fanatical and ultra in their notions, and so transcendental in their views on the slavery question, and at the same time so narrow-minded and bigoted, as to have received from the other two great parties the appellation of one-ideaists. Their principles were odious to both the other political organizations, insomuch that the Whigs would acknowledge with them no affinity of purpose or aim, whilst to the Democrats their very touch was regarded as leprous and contaminating. In speaking of them, in a speech delivered at Lexington, Ky., in 1851, Henry Clay said: "If the Whig party is to be merged into a *contemptible* Abolition party, and if abolitionism is to be engrafted on to the Whig creed, from that moment I renounce the party and cease to be a Whig. I go a step farther. If I am alive I will give my humble support to that man for the Presidency who, to whatever party he may belong, is not contaminated by fanaticism, rather than one who, crying out all the time he is a Whig, maintains doctrines utterly subversive of the Constitution and the Union."

One of the modes by which the Black Republican Abolition party hopes to procure the abolition of slavery everywhere, is, by incendiary speeches and publications, to array the North against the South, and the South against the North, and thus to produce a dissolution of the Union. With many of its leaders this is an avowed purpose. The South thus weakened, they reason, will be unable to contend successfully against their "revolted slaves" and "British bayonets." A more diabolical intent or infamous purpose never entered the heart of wicked men. Thus do they plot treason against the Constitution, and thus would they destroy the last hope of Liberty on earth.

After the Presidential contest in 1852, the Whig party, having been defeated in almost every State of the Union, disbanded. Clay and Webster, the great political leaders, around whom the Whig forces were wont to rally, were gone. There was left no common bond to hold the party longer together. In the speech above quoted, Clay felt that many of the northern Whigs had become indoctrinated with, to him, the odious principles of abolitionism. What he feared soon came to

pass, for most of the Whig leaders fell into the Abolition Know-Nothing ranks, taking with them many of the rank and file, so that in 1856 we find the Abolition party of the North swelled into an immense host, with John C. Fremont nominated as their candidate for President of the United States, on a platform which Geo. W. Julian, the head and front of abolitionism in Indiana, says "*he can stand upon, and, without doing much violence to its language, preach the whole anti-slavery gospel.*" Thus we see that these accessions to the Abolition party have neither changed nor modified its purposes. The whole Abolition party have accepted without reserve, and without qualification, John C. Fremont as their candidate, so that the predominant idea now, as heretofore, in the pending canvass, is the question of slavery.

They have already opened the canvass with such rallying cries and inscriptions on their banners as these: "Slavery is sectional, and liberty national." "*Kansas shall be free—peaceably at the ballot-box if we can, and forcibly if we must, by the sword!*" This latter sentiment was placarded at a meeting of Black Republicans recently held at Connersville, Indiana, to endorse the nomination of Fremont, and responded to by Sam Parker and C. B. Smith, esqs., well known, not long since, as leaders of the great Whig party. The sentiment repudiates the principles of the Kansas act—framed in conformity with the compromise of 1850, which they once so unequivocally endorsed. They now say in effect, the people of the Territory may govern themselves through the ballot-box, *if they govern as we wish; IF NOT, THE SWORD SHALL COMPEL THEM.* Abolitionism never took a bolder step than this, heretofore.

If such threats had been made in 1852, or prior to that time, both the Whig and Democratic parties would have cried out, "Abolitionism!" "Abolitionism!" But times have changed, and men are simple enough to suppose that they can adopt a principle, and, by denying the name, the embodiment, of the principle, escape its odium and deceive the unwary into its support.

Having premised thus much, we come now to the point in question, namely, the outrages alleged to have been perpetrated in Kansas, and who is responsible for them, which, after all, now is the great question.

That there have been wrong and misrule in Kansas, and, in some instances, inhuman outrages, there can be no question; but these have been, by political agitators, greatly exaggerated, and, in many instances, had no foundation in fact. Now for a few instances: At one time the telegraph announced the city of Lawrence had been sacked and burnt, and its inhabitants nearly all murdered by the "border ruffians." Time, however, corrected this falsehood. The city was neither sacked nor burnt. A mob of Missourians had destroyed a printing press of the free-State men, and perhaps burnt a house used by them as a fort to shoot at the border ruffians; and, if I recollect rightly, one man was killed by the accidental falling of a brick from the house on his head. But he was a border ruffian, and of course merited his fate!

Again, it was reported that some five or six free-State men had been wantonly and cruelly murdered by the border ruffians. This happened to be true as to the murder, but it again turned out that the border ruf-

fians were the men murdered, and the murders were committed by the free-State men.

The majority and minority reports of the Congressional committee, sent out to Kansas recently, state, so far as regards frauds upon the ballot-box, that both the border ruffians and free-State men had been guilty—both had perpetrated frauds; and I am not aware that they have decided the question to which faction is to be ascribed the numerical honor of the greatest amount of fraud.

Every day almost brings some report of new outrages, and every day corrects the falsehoods of the telegraph. The object of giving publicity to these falsehoods and exaggerations must be very apparent to every man with a thimble-full of brains. It is to inflame the mind of the North, and to operate upon the coming elections. If the purpose were simply to vindicate the truth of history, or to correct a wrong, as honest and candid men they would give us the simple truth; but this would spoil their capital.

And now we come to the important point: Is the Democratic party responsible for these wrongs? It is charged by their opponents that it is. We aver this charge is false and slanderous, and we will prove it so. In what way are we responsible? Not by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska act, for it recognises the great fundamental principle of self-government enunciated in the Declaration of Independence, namely, the right of the people to govern themselves; and confers this power on those of this Territory. If, therefore, they are capable of self-government, outrage and wrong could not spring, as a natural consequence, from its enactment.

But, say our opponents, if you had not repealed the Missouri Compromise, there would have been no outrages in Kansas. By a parity of reasoning we might make God the author of sin. God created man, and man committed sin; therefore, God is the author of sin! This is what the disciples of Locke would term a *reductio ad absurdum*, or, in other words, not a legitimate conclusion from the premises. But how do they know that wrongs and outrages would not have been committed in Kansas if the Missouri compromise had never been repealed? All the outrages there are in clear and palpable violation of the organic law; and if lawless men will violate one law, will they not violate another? What care they for the Missouri compromise more than the Kansas act? The latter says they shall not commit frauds and wrongs, nor interfere in the affairs of the Territory. The former can say the same thing no stronger. But let us look at this reasoning. "If you had not repealed the Missouri compromise there would have been no outrages in Kansas; therefore, the authors of the Kansas act are responsible." What does the Kansas-Nebraska bill do? It simply says that the people of those Territories shall govern themselves. Does this right of self-government necessarily breed outrage and wrong? Is it productive of troubles and bloodshed? Do these things follow in its footsteps as a necessary consequence? If so, then are our revolutionary fathers blamable, for they inaugurated the doctrine, fought for it, suffered for it, bled for it, and many of them died for it. But, if this doctrine of self-government is productive of all these mischiefs,

how comes it that Nebraska is quiet? The same act organized both Territories; the same provisions were applied to both; they are contiguous Territory, lying side by side. How comes it that no wrongs, no outrages, have been committed in Nebraska, while Kansas has teemed with them? If the repeal of the Missouri compromise has committed these mischiefs in Kansas, why has it not done so in Nebraska? If it was a bad act, it would produce bad fruits *everywhere*. No, the repeal of the Missouri compromise has not bred these difficulties in Kansas, but the impudent and outrageous interference of outsiders has caused them. The Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society is the author of these troubles. Up to the time of its organization *there was quiet in Kansas*; nobody pretended to say that there were any outrages there; all was peace and quiet. But, in direct violation of the organic act, which said that the people of Kansas should be left free to manage their own affairs, the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society determined—*by the power of money*—to rule that Territory for them. They were the *first* to interfere. The Missourians thought that if Massachusetts had a right to interfere, they had also. And here we desire to quote the following prophetic language of Henry Clay, as a fair statement of the result of such interference: “The Abolitionists, let me suppose, succeed in their present aim of uniting the inhabitants of the free States as one man against the inhabitants of the slave States. Union on the one side will beget union on the other; and this process of reciprocal consolidation *will be attended with all the violent prejudices, embittered passions, and implacable animosities, which ever degraded or deformed human nature. One section will stand in menacing and hostile array against the other. The collision of opinion will be quickly followed by the clash of arms.*” How true as to the state of affairs in Kansas! These outside influences would not let the people of Kansas manage their own affairs; and even yet, after so many wrongs have resulted from outside interference, and after it has become evident to every unprejudiced and unbiased mind that these influences have been the cause of all the mischief and wrong there, yet inflammatory speeches are being made in Congress, and from the pulpit in the North, desecrating the Sabbath and the pulpit to the collection of Sharpe’s rifles, for the purpose of arming men and sending them out to the Territory, to engage in what? Civil war, and the indiscriminate butchery and assassination of American citizens who do not happen to think as they do. Thus do they now propose to dedicate Kansas to a *bloody freedom*. And what, let us ask in all sincerity, what are all these demonstrations intended to subserve? To protect the rights of the people of the Territory? No! It is to subserve a political end, to accomplish which Black Republican agitators would involve the whole country in a civil war, and drench the Territory of Kansas in blood.

It is not our purpose to enter into a further detail of the aggressions upon the rights of the people of Kansas by these Black Republican abolition agitators of the North, through their pelf and piety emigrant aid societies, nor by the “border ruffians” from Missouri. By both there have been invasions of the soil, and infractions upon the

rights of the settler; but for neither is the Democratic party responsible. They who wrong them were not instigated so to do by the Democratic party; neither did it approve or sanction any of their acts. Not so the Black Republicans. They committed these aggressions from the North; they raised money and put Sharpe's rifles into the hands of men; and after instilling into their minds their own traitorous sentiments and fell purposes, sent them out to Kansas, not to protect the rights of the honest *bona fide* settler, but to drive from thence those whose sentiments might not accord with their own. And these acts and this purpose are justified and approved by the Black Republicans openly and avowedly, covered up, only, under the flimsy pretext of a purpose to give "freedom to Kansas!"

Not so with the Democratic party. It condemns these aggressions and the instigators thereof; and, unless the Black Republicans in Congress defeat the bill to redress the wrongs and give peace to Kansas, which passed the Democratic Senate on the 3d day of July, 1856, the citizens of this unfortunate Territory shall have freedom of speech and of the press, the abrogation of the odious test oaths passed by the Kansas legislature, and an untrammelled ballot-box. But as we shall show, presently, these Black Republicans who have been wailing so piteously and hypocritically over the wrongs they themselves have been inflicting upon Kansas, do not want this agitation to cease, for that would destroy one half their whole stock in trade. Kansas and Sumner, and Sumner and Kansas, constitute the last pitiful remnant of their whole political capital. When this is gone, come bankruptcy and utter ruin to their hopes.

The men engaged in this foray upon the rights of the people of Kansas, both from the North and South, are enemies of the Democratic party, and seek its overthrow. Those from the South know its effect will be to weaken the Democracy in the North, whilst those in the North know full well that this is their only chance of success in the pending canvass.

The language of the Democracy is, that the wrongs of Kansas must and shall be redressed; that neither Giddings nor Sumner, nor Wilson nor Chase, nor their abolition emigrant aid cohorts, on the one hand, nor Stringfellow and his Missouri forces on the other, shall longer be permitted to trample under foot the rights guaranteed to the citizens of the Territory by the Kansas-Nebraska act. If they will not let her have peace peaceably, why, then she shall have it forcibly at the point of the sword; not the sword of an irresponsible and infuriated mob, but by the regularly constituted army of the United States, backed by the strong arm of the law.

Men of the North, a great crisis is upon the country. The question submitted for your consideration is, whether the constitution and the laws shall hold the supremacy, or whether sectionalism and mobocracy shall override both? Abolitionism emboldened by finding in its ranks some of the leaders of both the Whig and Democratic parties, many of the rank and file of the first, and a few of the latter, would urge you to forget your patriotism and love of country, and to join in a crusade against your southern brethren and the people of Kansas, under

alleged wrongs, many of which they are themselves the perpetrators—and for what? We again ask, for what? To give freedom and peace to Kansas? No; for no other object than that they may acquire political power. Why, it is but a few days ago that one of the New York Tribune's (Greeley's paper). "Kansas-outrage" manufacturers, speaking of a northern Kansas company on the road, said in that paper:

"I almost *hope* to hear that some of their lives have been sacrificed, for it seems as if nothing but that would rouse the eastern States to act."

What a villanous sentiment! "Almost *hope* to hear" that some of the lives of their own brethren—sympathizers and aiders with them, in the same cause—have been taken, so that they may arouse and inflame the public mind, and thereby acquire political power! They must have place and power, even though it be through oceans of human blood, and at the expense of the Union. A more execrable, fiendish "hope," has never before been expressed by the vilest criminal of any land.

Is any man simple enough to believe that these men really desire to give peace to Kansas? If so, give ear and take heed whilst we submit facts to undeceive you.

On the 3d day of July, 1856, "An act to authorize the people of the Territory of Kansas to form a constitution and State government, preparatory to their admission into the Union, on an equal footing with the original States," was resumed, amended, passed the Senate, and ordered to be printed. As we shall show presently, this bill complied in every particular with the suggestions of the Black Republican committee, and if it shall be passed by the House, will give peace and quiet to Kansas, and protect the citizens in their political and private rights.

The majority of the committee sent out, some months since, by the Black Republican House of Representatives, to investigate the alleged wrongs in Kansas, in their recent report demand, first, that Kansas shall be admitted into the Union as a State. The bill provides for this; in proof of which we quote sections 8 and 16:

"SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted*, That an election shall be held for members of a convention to form a constitution for the State of Kansas, according to the apportionment to be made aforesaid, on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, eighteen hundred and fifty-six, to be held at such places and to be conducted in such manner, both as to persons who shall superintend such election and the returns thereof, as the board of commissioners shall appoint and direct, except in cases by this act otherwise provided; and at such election no person shall be permitted to vote unless his name shall appear on said corrected lists."

"SEC. 16. *And be it further enacted*, That the delegates thus elected shall assemble in convention at the capitol of said Territory on the first Monday in December next; and when so assembled, shall first determine by a majority of the whole number of members elected whether it be or be not expedient at that time to form a constitution and State government; and if deemed expedient, shall proceed to

form a constitution and State government, which shall be republican in its form, for admission into the Union on an equal footing with the original States in all respects whatever, by the name of the State of Kansas."

Second. They charge that frauds have been perpetrated on the ballot-box; that vast numbers of illegal votes have been cast; that men have been driven from the polls by violence; that men voted who were not inhabitants of the Territory; and they demand that these wrongs be suppressed.

The bill provides for all this, in proof of which we cite the substance of sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 20, which provide for the appointment of commissioners, who shall proceed to "cause to be made a full and faithful enumeration of the legal voters resident in each county in said Territory on the 4th day of July, 1856, and to make an apportionment of the members for a convention among the different counties in said Territory." That they shall cause to be published, and distributed among the inhabitants of the several counties, copies of the census and apportionment, to the end that any error in them may be corrected. That "no other than a white male citizen of the United States, who may be a *bona fide* inhabitant of said Territory on the 4th day of July, 1856, and who shall have resided three months next before the election in the county in which he offers to vote, and whose name shall appear on the corrected list of the census, shall be entitled to vote." That in order that there may be no interruption or interference with the citizens of the Territory, it is enacted that the election shall take place on the day of the presidential election—the time of voting in *every* State of the Union. And still further, to prevent all frauds and violence, the 20th section pledges the whole military force of the United States "to secure the faithful execution of the provisions of this act."

Third. They charge that the Legislature of Kansas have enacted oppressive laws, abridging the freedom of speech and of the press; suspending the writ of habeas corpus; imposing excessive fines; inflicting cruel and unusual punishments; requiring test-oaths to support legislative acts, in order to the right of suffrage and service as a juror, and demand that these laws be abrogated. The bill concedes all this, in proof of which we quote section 18:

"SEC. 18. *And be it further enacted*, That inasmuch as the Constitution of the United States and the organic act of said Territory has secured to the inhabitants thereof certain inalienable rights, of which they cannot be deprived by any legislative enactment, therefore no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust; no law shall be in force or enforced in said Territory respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and petition for the redress of grievances; the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated; and no warrant shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to

be searched, and the person or things to be seized; nor shall the rights of the people to keep and bear arms be infringed. No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself; nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation. In all criminal prosecution, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury of the district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process of obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence. The privilege of habeas corpus shall not be suspended unless, when in case of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it. In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States than according to the rules of the common law. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted. No law shall be made or have force or effect in said Territory which shall require a test oath, or oath to support any act of Congress or other legislative act as a qualification for any civil office or public trust, or for any employment or profession, or to serve as a juror or vote at an election, or which shall impose any tax upon or condition to the exercise of the right of suffrage by any qualified voter, or which shall restrain or prohibit the free discussion of any law or subject of legislation in the said Territory, or the free expression of opinion thereon by the people of said Territory."

Driven, by the provisions of this bill, from their vantage ground of agitation; unable, with all their talent or ability, to find a flaw in its provisions, or to impeach its justice or its equity, yet determined to be satisfied with nothing that would restore peace to an agitated country and quiet to that ill-fated Territory, the abolition confederates in the Senate could rake up only two objections, as they termed it, to the "*surroundings of the bill*," not to the bill itself. First, as to these "*surroundings*," they alleged that the leaders of the free-State men of Kansas had been driven out of the Territory, and were in exile. The majority of the Committee on Territories in the Senate, with an earnest and just desire to obviate all objections, and remove all ground of complaint, even though captious, so that these fanatics should have left not an inch of ground to stand upon, through Mr. DOUGLAS, their chairman, reported an amendment to the bill, which provides that they shall have three months in which to return. Here is the amendment:

"All persons who shall possess the other qualifications for voters under this act, and who shall have been *bona fide* inhabitants of said

Territory at any time since its organization, and who shall have absented themselves therefrom in consequence of the disturbances therein, and who shall return before the first day of October next and become *bona fide* inhabitants of the Territory with the intent of making it their permanent home, and shall present satisfactory evidence of these facts to the board of commissioners, shall be entitled to vote at said election, and to have their names placed on said corrected list of voters for that purpose; and to avoid all conflict in the complete execution of this act, all other elections in said Territory are hereby postponed until such time as said convention shall appoint."

This amendment was adopted, and now forms a part of the bill, and may be found in the 11th section thereof.

Second, as to the "surroundings," they alleged that fair and just men would not be appointed to take the census.

Immediately upon this enunciation, the venerable sage of Michigan (LEWIS CASS) rose in his place in the Senate, and pledged himself that the appointments should be fair, just, and honorable.

Yet, in the face of all these concessions and assurances, and these endeavors to do equal and exact justice to the citizens of Kansas, and every section of the Union, and to remove every objection, even though captious, to this great measure of pacification and peace, the Black Republican abolition cordierates of the Senate *not only voted, to a man, against the bill—not only voted against the repeal of the obnoxious laws of the Kansas legislature, which they had hitherto demanded—not only voted against the restoration of the freedom of speech and of the press, which they alleged had been abridged by this legislature—not only voted against the abrogation of the test oaths—but*, driven to the wall, all their pretexis one by one taken from them, their last resort was, to make the audacious charge that this bill was intended to make Kansas a slave State! Thus admitting that a majority of the *bona fide* settlers of Kansas are in favor of slavery; for this bill says that a majority shall decide this question. Thus, too, did they belie their recent assertions, that a majority of the people of the Territory were in favor of freedom. And thus did they also admit that the Topeka constitution, under which they demand the admission of Kansas, does not speak the voice of the people of Kansas—allegations which they have made all along this session. It is thus that in order to rake and scrape up objections to the "surrounding" of the bill, these men, as occasion requires, can eat up their own words, falsify their former declarations, and stultify themselves. But a few short weeks ago they swore and affirmed that a majority of the people of Kansas were in favor of freedom there—a declaration which we then believed, and now believe, to be true; and we believe, further, that Kansas will come into this Union as a free State. But these agitators, for the purpose of manufacturing political capital, are now ready to swear that their own declarations, made only a few short weeks ago, were untrue and false. What confidence, we ask, ought to be placed in the declarations of such men?

We submit now, in all candor, to every just and fair-minded man in Indiana, whether the Democratic party is, in any sense, chargeable with the unfortunate state of affairs in Kansas—whether they have not

sought, by every means in their power, to suppress all violence there, and to protect the people in all their rights and privileges—whether, by the provisions of this bill, they have not shown themselves to be the friends of peace and quiet—the true friends of Kansas. We submit the case to your decision upon this calm and impartial review of the facts.

Violence may still reign in Kansas. *Why?* The Abolition Black Republican confederates have so determined. The Democratic party washes its hands of all participation in it. Murder and wrong may still rule the Territory. *Why?* The Black Republican Abolition confederates need this excitement for political ends. The Democratic party washes its hands of all participation in them. We have sought, by the provisions of a just and equitable bill, to put a stop to scenes for which the men who now refuse a just measure of redress are responsible; but they have resolved that there shall be no peace, and before the country, before God and man, we arraign them as the guilty authors of the bloodshed and violence which have stained the soil of Kansas.

In conclusion, in order to establish beyond controversy the dangerous purposes of these Black Republican leaders, we desire to call the attention of every man to the recent Kansas convention, held at Buffalo, New York, over which Governor Reeder presided. He and Gerrit Smith were the principal actors, the latter giving \$1,500 per month to send men and arms into Kansas. We desire to quote from these men; and we will first introduce Mr. Smith:

“Mr. Smith continued to speak of the aggressions of the South, and said he only hoped to hear of a collision at Topeka; that he only desired to hear of a collision with the federal troops, and that northern men had fallen; and then he would hear of northern States arraying themselves against the federal government. And would that be the end? No; Missouri would be the next battle-field, and then slavery would be driven to the wall. Her strength is only apparent; it consists half in northern cowards and doughfaces. It has been brave and rampant only because the North has fled before it. It will run when the North faces it. He believed the time had come to use physical force.”

This shows that these men intend to array themselves against the federal government. Now for Governor Reeder:

“Governor Reeder read to the convention the report from Kansas of the dispersion of the Territorial legislature by Colonel Sumner, and remarked, at the close, that he was sorry that the legislature had not waited till driven out at the point of the bayonet. [Cheers.]

“Mr. L. R. Noble asked how many troops there were belonging to the United States in Kansas?

“Governor Reeder said about 600.

“Mr. Noble. And how many in the entire army of the United States?

“Governor Reeder. I believe 15,000.

“Mr. Noble. I learn from a friend near me that they can't send more than 10,000 men into Kansas; and so I say let us go on.

“Gerrit Smith desired to see the contributions continued.

“A delegate said he would give one hundred men who did not fear

the devil, and who, like Cromwell, would praise God and keep their powder dry.

"Gerrit Smith thought funds were wanted first, and hoped to see the subscriptions go on. He urged in several speeches that the time had come when it was necessary to use physical force.

"To this Governor Reeder replied that he was not in favor of waiting because they had not received wrongs enough, but thought it right to wait until they could strike an effective blow. If it remained with him to use the power of the government, he would not have waited thus long, but the oppressors before this would have been converted into heaps of dead men on the fields of Missouri. But he was willing to wait until to-morrow, or two to-morrows. When on the trail of the enemy, against whom he had a deadly hate, he would follow him with cat-like tread, and would not strike until he could strike him surely dead. He was, therefore, willing to wait until they had the power he would thus have used. He did not wish to give the South notice of their intentions by marching armed men into the Territory. The dragons could go in as voters, or to cultivate the soil, and strike when the right time arrived. When the right time came to strike, he wanted the South to have the first notice of the blow in the blow itself."

Can such diabolical treason against the government of the United States as is here avowed receive the sanction of the law-abiding and order-loving people of this republic? Will not such proceedings open the eyes of thousands to the character of Kansas agitation? Can good citizens, friends of order, lovers of their country, reverers of the works of the fathers of the republic, countenance this purpose of open rebellion to the government of the country?

Letter of Hon. J. D. Bright to the Democratic Mass Meeting at Indianapolis, July 17, 1856.

WASHINGTON, July 12, 1856.

DEAR SIR: I have seen senators Cass, Douglas, and Brown, and representative Cobb, of Georgia, and, agreeably to your request, have invited them, in behalf of the State Central Committee, to attend the mass meeting of our friends at Indianapolis, on the 17th instant. Mr. Cobb has assured me that he would be present, but the other gentlemen feel that they cannot, consistently with their pressing duties here, be absent for the length of time such a visit would necessarily require, and they beg to be excused.

For myself, nothing would afford me more pleasure than to unite on the occasion with the democracy of our State in ratifying the nominations of that experienced and profound statesman, James Buchanan, for President, and the equally worthy and gifted young son of Kentucky, John C. Breckinridge, for Vice-President; but my official engagements here are of such a character as to forbid my leaving at this time.

I avail myself, however, of the opportunity to say to you, and to the

mass-gathering of our friends, and to my constituents generally, that so soon as my duties here will permit, I shall hasten home, with the intention of visiting as many counties as time will allow, and holding converse with the people, face to face, on the absorbing questions of the day. If there ever was a time when the constituent and his representative should be brought close together to commune with each other freely, it is the present. The systematic effort that is being made to array one section of our common country against another, upon a purely *local* question, and to inflame the worst passions of men, by misrepresentation and falsehood, is well calculated to alarm those who love the Union and desire its perpetuity. Against the dangers of *sectionalism* we were early warned by the Father of his Country; yet the tendency of the public mind for the past few years, led on by men sometimes designing and always fanatical, has been towards that result, until now we see, for the first time in the history of our country, a formidable *sectional* party, presenting *sectional* candidates for the highest offices in the nation's gift, and basing their claims to election upon purely *sectional* grounds. It is appalling to contemplate the consequences which must result from the success of such a party; for it can end in nothing less than the dismemberment of that glorious Union—the work of our revolutionary patriots—the bequest of our revolutionary sires—to which we are indebted for our security at home and our consideration and dignity abroad. The Union had its origin in the wants and necessities of the *whole* people and of the several States, and every year of its existence has afforded fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings. Under its benign influences, agriculture, commerce, every industrial pursuit, have flourished in an unparalleled degree, and we have grown, in the short period of three-quarters of a century, from an inconsiderable power to be one of the mightiest nations of the world. We might well pause to consider whether it would be wise to throw all these advantages away for the very illusory, unsubstantial gains which *sectionalism* would furnish. For myself, “I have not,” in the language of the immortal Webster, “coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union should be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it shall be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day at least, that curtain may not rise. God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind. When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, the sun in Heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonoured fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather be-

hold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as '*What is all this worth?*' Nor those other words of delusion and folly, *Liberty first, and Union afterwards*; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole Heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart, *Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.*"

A firm believer in man's capacity for self-government, I will not allow myself to suppose that the people of Indiana, hitherto devoted to the Union, will become so blind and led away by passion and prejudice, as to be willing to hazard the stability of a government that has afforded them so much of security and prosperity, for the sake of removing a supposed evil that exists *without* their borders, and with which, politically, they have no concernment. I will rather believe that they will adopt and adhere to those true principles, on which alone can this community of States be lasting—that the people of each State and Territory shall be left free to regulate their own domestic concerns in their own way, subject only to the constitution of the United States. In this way, each community attending to its own affairs, and leaving others to do the same, we may look forward with confidence to long years of continued growth in everything that makes a nation prosperous, happy, and great. But if, instead of this, each community shall undertake to decide, not only what is for their own good, but what is for their neighbor's also, then indeed shall "we have fallen upon evil times," and the days of the Union may be said to be already numbered.

I have not the time now to elaborate these views, but if I shall have the pleasure of meeting my fellow-citizens through the summer I will attempt it then.

Mr. Buchanan is eminently a national man, of great ability and enlarged experience; and his past record furnishes a sufficient guarantee that the government in his hands will be ably and faithfully administered—not upon sectional, but upon national ground. If elected, he will be the President of the *whole* people, not of a part merely. Col. Fremont has no political antecedents; and we all know that he is the chosen candidate of a miserable, sectional, higher-law party, that sets at defiance all constitutional obligations when they conflict with their perverted notions of political morality.

I feel great solicitude that, in this contest, the voice of Indiana should be heard above the battle's wrack, proclaiming her devotion to the Union and the constitution. Nor am I willing to believe that she will maintain any other position. I do not doubt that Indiana—the Democratic young giant of the Northwest—will put forth her wonted strength to preserve the integrity of our common government. Only let her national, constitution and Union-loving people understand the true issue—the living issue involved in this election, and from every

city, town, and hamlet, throughout the length and breadth of the State, they will rise in their majesty to protect the free institutions our fathers made, and to bury, in merited oblivion, the fanaticism and treason that would rob us of such a priceless inheritance.

Very truly and respectfully, yours,

J. D. BRIGHT.

To GORDON TANNER, Esq., *Secretary, &c.*